



Upper Cumberland Healthcare
Preparedness Coalition
Vulnerable Populations Tabletop
Exercise

After Action Report/Improvement Plan
August 25, 2023

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This exercise is an opportunity for Healthcare Coalition stakeholders (Long Term Care, Assisted Living, Dialysis, Ancillary Surgery, Home Health, Hospice) to enhance plans associated with mass casualty incidents, communications & IT failures, supply and fuel shortages, and facility evacuation. This exercise also serves to assist coalition members in regional coordination and information sharing during a region-wide disaster or emergency. The objectives were:

1. Evaluate the participating facilities' internal plans to shelter patients and staff in the event a tornado is in the area.
2. Evaluate internal and external communications and ability to adapt backup communication methods.
3. Evaluate ability to assess available resources/fuel and appropriately request additional support if required.
4. Evaluate plans to initiate and carry out an evacuation.
5. Evaluate plans to triage and transport patients and staff during a mass casualty event.

The exercise planning team was composed of the Vulnerable Populations Coordinator (VPC) and Regional Healthcare Coordinator (RHC) with input from regional Long Term Care, Assisted Living, Dialysis, Ancillary Surgery, Home Health, and Hospice coalition members.

The purpose of this report is to analyze exercise results, identify strengths to be maintained and built upon, identify potential areas for further improvement, and support development of corrective actions.

Major Strengths

The major strengths identified during this exercise are as follows:

- Sound tornado / evacuation plans in place
- Well-trained and informed staff with understanding of roles/responsibilities

Major Successes

The major successes identified during this exercise are as follows:

- Relationship building with VP facilities and other coalition members
- Ability to exercise and test emergency action plans and evaluate resources
- Identification of areas for improvement

Primary Areas for Improvement

Throughout the exercise, several opportunities for improvement were identified in the Coalition's ability to respond to the incident. The primary areas for improvement are as follows:

- Staffing shortages could cause difficulties when carrying out emergency plans
- External communication abilities, e.g., HAM radio
- Frequency / availability of continuous training
- Not all facilities have backup generators
- Lack of emergency medical supplies
- Rural / remote locations of some facilities

EXERCISE OVERVIEW

Exercise Name	Upper Cumberland Healthcare Preparedness Coalition – Vulnerable Populations Tabletop Exercise
Exercise Dates	August 25, 2023
Scope	This is a community-wide tabletop exercise (TTX) focusing on response to a mass casualty incident (tornado) and resulting communications & IT failures, supply and fuel shortages, and possible facility evacuation, with participation from partners of the Upper Cumberland Healthcare Preparedness Coalition.
Mission Area(s)	Response and Recovery
Core Capabilities	HPP Capabilities 1: Foundation of Healthcare and Medical Readiness, 2: Healthcare and Medical Response Coordination, 3: Continuity of Healthcare Service Delivery
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the participating facilities’ internal plans to shelter patients and staff in the event a tornado is in the area. • Evaluate internal and external communications and ability to adapt backup communication methods. • Evaluate ability to assess available resources/fuel and appropriately request additional support if required. • Evaluate plans to initiate and carry out an evacuation. • Evaluate plans to triage and transport patients and staff during a mass casualty event.
Threat or Hazard	The existence of a destructive, long-track tornado moving through the Upper Cumberland region, secondary tornados, and subsequent communications and IT failures, supply and fuel shortages, and environmental hazards.
Scenario	March 14, 2024: At approximately 0115 AM, a destructive and extremely dangerous tornado located in southwestern Smith County has been confirmed. The long-track tornado is moving east/southeast at a speed of approximately 45 mph. The power and trajectory of the tornado suggest it will likely track through Putnam County and Cumberland County.

Multiple additional widespread tornados have been radar-confirmed across several counties in the Upper Cumberland region. At this time, tornado threat cannot be ruled out for any specific area.

Your facility has received a tornado warning with a directive to take cover immediately to prevent loss of life, and that there is a high likelihood of severe structural damage.

Sponsor Upper Cumberland Healthcare Preparedness Coalition sponsored this exercise utilizing Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) grant funding.

- Participating Organizations**
- Celina Health & Rehab
 - Fresenius Medical Care Cookeville
 - Fresenius Medical Care Crossville
 - Wharton Nursing Home
 - Willow Branch
 - Signature Healthcare of Putnam
 - WyndRidge
 - Dominion Senior Living Crossville
 - Davita Cookeville
 - Davita Livingston
 - Davita Foreman Drive & Sparta
 - Quality Home Health
 - Generations Center of Spencer
 - Perimeter Surgery Center
 - Plateau Surgery Center
 - NHC Cookeville
 - NHC Homecare Cookeville
 - NHC Homecare
 - Putnam County EOC
 - Overton County Health and Rehab
 - AHC Bethesda
 - Deaconess HomeCare
 - Life Care Center of Crossville
 - Standing Stone
 - TDH
 - Cumberland Medical Center

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Exercise Planning Team

- Kyle Gamache – Vulnerable Populations Coordinator (VPC)
- Michael Cooper – Regional Healthcare Coordinator (RHC)
- Upper Cumberland Healthcare Preparedness Coalition member VP facilities

EXERCISE DESIGN SUMMARY

Exercise Purpose and Design

This exercise is an opportunity for Healthcare Coalition stakeholders (Long Term Care, Assisted Living, Dialysis, Ancillary Surgery, Home Health, Hospice) to enhance plans associated with mass casualty incidents, communications & IT failures, supply and fuel shortages, and facility evacuation. This exercise also serves to assist coalition members in regional coordination and information sharing during a region-wide disaster or emergency.

Exercise Objectives and Core Capabilities

The following exercise objectives in Table 1 describe the expected outcomes for the exercise. The objectives are linked to core capabilities, which are distinct critical elements necessary to achieve the specific mission area(s). The objectives and aligned core capabilities are guided by elected and appointed officials and selected by the Exercise Planning Team.

Table 1. Exercise Objectives and Associated Core Capabilities

Exercise Objective	HPP Capability, Objective, and Activity
Evaluate the participating facilities' internal plans to shelter patients and staff in the event a tornado is in the area.	Capability 1, Objective 2, Activity 2 Capability 1, Objective 4, Activity 3 Capability 1, Objective 4, Activity 5 Capability 2, Objective 2, Activity 1 Capability 2, Objective 2, Activity 3 Capability 2, Objective 3, Activity 1 Capability 3, Objective 5, Activity 1 Capability 4, Objective 2, Activity 1
Evaluate internal and external communications and ability to adapt backup communication methods.	Capability 1, Objective 2, Activity 2 Capability 1, Objective 2, Activity 4 Capability 1, Objective 4, Activity 3 Capability 1, Objective 4, Activity 5 Capability 2, Objective 2, Activity 1 Capability 2, Objective 2, Activity 3 Capability 2, Objective 3, Activity 1 Capability 3, Objective 5, Activity 1 Capability 3, Objective 5, Activity 2 Capability 4, Objective 2, Activity 1
Evaluate ability to assess available resources/fuel and appropriately request additional support if required.	Capability 1, Objective 2, Activity 2 Capability 1, Objective 2, Activity 4 Capability 1, Objective 4, Activity 3 Capability 1, Objective 4, Activity 5 Capability 2, Objective 2, Activity 1 Capability 2, Objective 2, Activity 3

	Capability 2, Objective 3, Activity 1 Capability 4, Objective 2, Activity 1 Capability 4, Objective 2, Activity 11
Evaluate plans to initiate and carry out an evacuation.	Capability 1, Objective 4, Activity 1 Capability 2, Objective 2, Activity 1 Capability 2, Objective 2, Activity 3 Capability 2, Objective 3, Activity 3 Capability 2, Objective 2, Activity 1
Evaluate plans to triage and transport patients and staff during a mass casualty event.	Capability 1, Objective 4, Activity 5 Capability 2, Objective 3, Activity 1 Capability 2, Objective 3, Activity 3 Capability 4, Objective 2, Activity 1 Capability 4, Objective 2, Activity 4 Capability 4, Objective 2, Activity 7 Capability 4, Objective 2, Activity 8 Capability 4, Objective 2, Activity 11

Scenario Summary

Scenario began on March 14, 2024. It revolved around the existence of a destructive, long-track tornado moving through the Upper Cumberland region, secondary tornados, and subsequent communications and IT failures, supply and fuel shortages, and environmental hazards.

March 14, 2024: At approximately 0115 AM, a destructive and extremely dangerous tornado located in southwestern Smith County was confirmed. The long-track tornado was moving east/southeast at a speed of approximately 45 mph. The power and trajectory of the tornado suggested it would likely track through Putnam County and Cumberland County.

Multiple additional widespread tornados were radar-confirmed across several counties in the Upper Cumberland region. At the time, tornado threat could not be ruled out for any specific area.

Facilities received a tornado warning with a directive to take cover immediately to prevent loss of life, and that there was a high likelihood of severe structural damage.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this exercise was great practice for an actual mass casualty tornado event. It was thought provoking, and participant feedback was positive. Most felt that the opportunity to get together virtually and talk through the scenario helped build better relationships and benefited future coordination among the participants; however, several participants believe the exercise would be further beneficial if held in-person in the future. Participants expressed they successfully identified gaps and areas of improvement through exercise response, and the exercise facilitated excellent internal discussions. Members expressed interest in participation in this type of exercise more frequently. Participants noted the structure and presenters were organized and very detailed, and that the exercise ran smoothly. All participants expressed that the exercise was beneficial

and that they would like for the coalition to hold additional exercises of this type in the future.

APPENDIX A: EXERCISE SCHEDULE AND ACRONYMS

Time	Activity
August 25, 2023	
9:00AM	Welcome, Opening Remarks, Background Review
9:25 AM	Inject 1
9:55 AM	Inject 2
10:10 AM	Inject 3
10:25 AM	Hotwash
11:00 AM	Close

Acronym	Term
VP	Vulnerable Populations
TTX	Tabletop Exercise
IT	Information Technology
HPP	Hospital Preparedness Program
RMCC	Regional Medical Communication Center
RHC	Regional Hospital Coordinator
UCHPC	Upper Cumberland Healthcare Preparedness Coalition
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
EOPs	Emergency Operations Plans
HCC	Healthcare Coalition
TNHAN	Tennessee Health Alert Network
HRTS	Healthcare Resource Tracking System
ENDEX	End of Exercise
ICS	Incident Command System
VPC	Vulnerable Populations Coordinator
RHC	Regional Healthcare Coordinator

APPENDIX B EXERCISE PARTICIPANTS

Participating Organizations
Celina Health & Rehab
Fresenius Medical Care Cookeville
Fresenius Medical Care Crossville
Wharton Nursing Home
Willow Branch
Signature Healthcare of Putnam
WyndRidge
Dominion Senior Living Crossville
Davita Cookeville
Davita Livingston
Davita Foreman Drive & Sparta
Quality Home Health
Generations Center of Spencer
Perimeter Surgery Center
Plateau Surgery Center
NHC Cookeville
NHC Homecare Cookeville
NHC Homecare
Putnam County EOC
Overton County Health and Rehab
AHC Bethesda
Deaconess HomeCare
Life Care Center of Crossville
Standing Stone
TDH
Cumberland Medical Center